

**Subject:** Press Release - Pedestrian Safety Month

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## **The Spotlight Is On Pedestrian Safety in September**

*California Pedestrian Safety Month Aims to Increase Pedestrian Safety Awareness*

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LOS ANGELES, CA (September 5, 2017)

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Sept. 1 marks the beginning of California Pedestrian Safety Month, first implemented in 2016 by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), with the goal to reduce the number of people walking killed and injured on California roadways. The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) as well as state agencies, community partners and law enforcement agencies throughout the state are urging people walking and driving to share the road responsibly.

In 2015, 852 people lost their lives while walking, and over 13,000 were injured – just on California's roadways alone. Preliminary figures indicate that 2016 may reach a modern record high of 900 fatalities. People walking account for nearly 25 percent of all roadway deaths in the state, up from 17 percent just ten years earlier.

Over the course of the past three years, Los Angeles has witnessed the tragedy of over 250 people killed while walking, with another 4,100 people walking injured – most with life changing disabilities. People walking account for only 8% of traffic collisions but represent almost half of all traffic deaths in Los Angeles. Traffic collisions are the leading cause of death for kids age 5 - 14 in Los Angeles County.

"Everyone has a role in keeping our streets and families safe. This month and every month we ask all Angelenos to be aware and alert traveling to and through our communities," said Nat Gale, Principal Project Coordinator at LADOT. "From a grandmother crossing the street to her local market to a child on her way to school, all Angelenos deserve to reach their destination safely."

Keeping people walking safe depends on a combination of street safety improvements, education and awareness, and strategic enforcement of unsafe behaviors, like speeding. In this vein, LADOT has recently implemented safety improvements - including 404 upgraded crosswalks, 109 speed feedback signs, and 117 intersection tightenings to reduce turning vehicle speeds - along 15 corridors with some of the highest concentration of deaths and serious injuries for people walking.

Joint efforts from LADOT, OTS, law enforcement and other community partners increase the safety of people walking throughout the entire state. Greater awareness and strategic enforcement of unsafe driving behavior at trouble spots can save lives and prevent life-changing injuries.

LADOT has partnered with the OTS on their safety campaign "[Pedestrians Don't Have Armor,](#)" which highlights the importance of pedestrian safety awareness, whether one is on foot or behind the wheel. The campaign's theme, which features characters who represent everyday people walking, but clad in body armor made from car parts, reminds everyone that in real life, people walking don't have armor and always lose when hit by a vehicle, no matter who is at fault.

Unsafe driving speed is the number one factor in collisions causing death and serious injury for people walking in Los Angeles. Angelenos are cautioned to check their speed and remember that even a good driver's car can be deadly when traveling at 40 mph. A person hit while walking by a car traveling at 40 mph has just a ten percent chance of surviving that collision. A person's odds of surviving the crash increase dramatically as driver speed declines – a person hit by a car traveling at 20 mph has an 80% chance of surviving.

Everyone is encouraged to put down the cell phones while travelling, since electronic distractions are seen in increasing numbers of fatal crashes. Other factors for drivers include failure to see and yield to people walking in crosswalks and intersections. To learn more about how to keep people walking safe our roadways, visit [Pedestrian Safety](#).

Last month, the City of Los Angeles marked the two-year anniversary of its Vision Zero Initiative, the City's goal to prioritize safety and reduce traffic fatalities. As co-chair of the Vision Zero initiative, LADOT has installed hundreds of life-saving improvements and reached thousands of Angelenos through its education campaign. Vision Zero enters its third year with \$27 million in the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget.

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